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Annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund to the Economic and Social Council

Note by the Secretariat**

1. In its decision 2002/2, of 21 January 2002, the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) requested the Executive Director to transmit the document entitled "Annual report to the Economic and Social Council" (E/ICEF/2002/4 (Part 1)), together with the comments made by the delegation at the first regular session of the Board, to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2002.

2. Part one of the present document contains the annual report of the Executive Director. Part two contains the summary of deliberations of the Executive Board on the annual report of the Executive Director.

* E/2002/100.

** The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

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Part one
Annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council*

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Implementation of the reform programmes of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review	1–60	4
	A. Structures and mechanisms	2–10	4
	B. Funding and resources	11–14	6
	C. Resident coordinator system	15–25	7
	D. Implementation of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework	26–35	8
	E. Harmonization of programmes and procedures	36–40	11
	F. Gender mainstreaming and gender balance	41–42	12
	G. Common premises and services	43–45	13
	H. Cooperation with the World Bank	46–51	13
	I. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators	52–60	14
II.	Integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits	61–72	16
III.	Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance	73–81	19

* Originally issued as document E/ICEF/2002/4 (Part I).

Abbreviations

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CERF	Central Emergency Revolving Fund
DGO	Development Group Office
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
EPF	Emergency Programme Fund
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IAAP	Inter-Agency Advisory Panel
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MICS	multiple indicator cluster surveys
MTSP	medium-term strategic plan
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
WFP	World Food Programme

I. Implementation of the reform programmes of the Secretary-General and the provisions of the triennial comprehensive policy review

1. At the time of finalization of the present report, the General Assembly was in the early stages of discussion leading to its adoption of a resolution on the triennial policy review. As in previous review years, when adopted, this document will become the basis for further action by UNICEF and other United Nations Development Group (UNDG) members in enhancing the operational activities of the United Nations. In anticipation of this review, at its July 2001 session, the Economic and Social Council adopted only a procedural resolution on operational activities, not requiring specific action by United Nations agencies. The present report, therefore, responds to earlier decisions of the Council on operational activities.

A. Structures and mechanisms

2. The effective functioning of UNDG as a substantive decision-making body is based on a high level of commitment of all members, an evolving submachinery and an effective joint support structure. With the addition of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2001, UNDG membership now totals 18, and includes most of the key agencies in the field-based operational activities of the United Nations system. During 2001, the support mechanisms were streamlined through a zero-base review, resulting in the creation of two working groups — programme and management — each chaired at the Assistant Secretary-General level. These two subsidiary groups effectively mirror the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (formerly the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)) structure, enabling UNDG to interface more effectively with the broader system on operational issues. Leadership of the working groups rotates among agencies, with sunset provisions for the bodies and semi-annual results reviews.

3. UNDG operations and meetings are effectively serviced by the Development Group Office (DGO). In an ongoing oversight role, the UNDG Support Group meets every two weeks to review ongoing work of the working groups and prepare meetings of principals in the Executive Committee or the full UNDG. UNDG and the Executive Committee each meet in alternative months, with additional ad hoc meetings of the Executive Committee called as necessary to review urgent issues of major importance.

4. During the past year, the major programme issues handled through these mechanisms included the following:

(a) The development and issuance of guidance notes for country teams related to UNDG involvement in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions; follow-up to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS; the role of United Nations country teams in support of monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); the application of a rights-based approach to programming; and programming for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative;

(b) The preparation of options for harmonized programme preparation and planning procedures among the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP);

(c) Initial follow-up to the external evaluation of the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) carried out for the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR).

5. Major issues dealt with during the year through the Management Group and its various subgroups were the modification and strengthening of the resident coordinator selection and appraisal methodologies; the expansion of United Nations houses and common premises; initiatives for the application of an expanded concept of common services; the introduction of a more proactive inter-agency staff mobility programme; and guidance to country teams on harmonizing conditions of service of national project personnel.

6. These mechanisms were also increasingly used to develop common UNDG positions or contributions to broader processes. A consolidated UNDG input for the preparation of the Secretary-General's "road map" for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration was developed, as was a common position on the Secretary-General's peace-building proposals and follow-up to the Brahimi report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. In a joint process with the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), UNDG also developed proposals for strengthening relations between the United Nations and the European Union in the development and humanitarian fields. Increasingly, joint meetings of UNDG, ECHA and the Executive Committee for Peace and Security are being held to address issues with multisectoral implications involving peace and security, development, humanitarian activities and human rights.

7. As the year ended, UNDG and is substructures were fully engaged in developing responses and common approaches to the aftermath of the 11 September attacks and the situation in Afghanistan, creating a task force to review and develop ideas for humanitarian and reconstruction/rehabilitation efforts and interacting closely with the Afghanistan Integrated Mission Task Force.

8. This joint pursuit of common interests and results on specific issues provides clear evidence of the increasing value and effectiveness of UNDG. It is an ongoing process in which UNICEF remains fully engaged and participates at all levels.

Problems and lessons learned

9. While UNDG strives to ensure the effective functioning of its structures and mechanisms and, through the introduction of a more rational structure, mirroring the ACC structure, there is some concern about the resulting workload for headquarters staff, including the demands it has placed on the time of executive heads which are growing with the expansion of UNDG itself. As is clear from the evaluation of field-level experiences with the introduction of CCA/UNDAF, coordination has costs in terms of time and financial/human resources. There is, therefore, a need for continued vigilance to ensure that there is value added in new processes and initiatives. This calls for strict prioritization of initiatives and issues as part of a rigorous results-based work planning process for UNDG.

Recommendations

10. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the UNDG structures now in place and *welcome* the efforts of UNDG to rationalize its subsidiary machinery and ensure a results-based approach to its work;

(b) *Reaffirm* the need for continued, close cooperation between UNDG members and the subsidiary machinery of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

(c) *Encourage* further use of the UNDG machinery for the implementation of the outcomes of the TCPR of 2001 and reporting thereon.

B. Funding and resources

11. The introduction of a pledging event in the context of the multi-year funding framework was held for the second time during the first regular session of the Executive Board in 2001. It has led to a number of positive outcomes:

(a) The predictability of current year regular resources has increased, with an indication of the likely availability of funds from a greater number of Governments at the beginning of the year;

(b) The ability of UNICEF to effectively manage its resources has improved, with the availability of payment schedules from 15 Governments;

(c) The predictability of future years resource availability has also improved, with 30 Governments providing either firm or tentative pledges for the next year;

(d) There has been some improvement in burden sharing among donors.

12. The trend in regular resources income from Governments to UNICEF in 2001 is similar to that experienced in 2000, where UNICEF received $1 million less than in 1999. The stagnation in regular resources income, which for the first time dropped to less than 50 per cent of total income in 2000, is of deep concern to UNICEF. Regular resources are the foundation for UNICEF country programmes and make it possible for UNICEF to respond quickly to changing priorities as well as emergencies, while at the same time ensuring a long-term planning perspective. It is of great importance that this declining trend be reversed to safeguard the essence of the organization and its capacity to deliver critical assistance to children and meet the programme targets in the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP).

13. UNICEF appreciates the increased amount of other resources received as it allows the organization to expand the reach and depth of country programmes and for emergency relief.

Recommendations

14. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Encourage* Member States to increase their annual voluntary contributions to regular resources;

(b) *Encourage* Governments in a position to do so to provide multi-year commitments and payment schedules to the pledging event held each year at the first regular session of the Executive Board.

C. Resident coordinator system

15. Strengthening the resident coordinator system remains a top priority for UNDG, and these efforts proceeded on several fronts. The most significant of these was the introduction of a new assessment methodology which, like other initiatives related to the resident coordinator system, was carried out by the UNDG Working Group on Resident Coordinator Issues.

16. A review of the established assessment system for potential resident coordinators highlighted several concerns, including the risk/possibility of false positives and false negatives, the need to ensure that the competency model and the assessment centre adequately reflect requirements for effective humanitarian response, and the need to address gender and cultural sensitivity. A new contract for developing and implementing a revised assessment system was awarded and, after extensive reviews and consultations within the United Nations system and a pilot exercise, the new methodology was adopted by UNDG in July.

17. The key improvements made in the new assessment procedure include:

(a) Ensuring that humanitarian response and preparedness capacities are adequately covered;

(b) Introducing a competency-based interview to help complement and supplement the outcomes of the other written, individual and group exercises;

(c) A thorough review and revision of the content of the individual exercises to eliminate/reduce likely agency, culture and gender bias in performance, while allowing for key values and attitudes to emerge, particularly on gender;

(d) Ensuring that due space and time are given to candidates for whom English is not a first language to perform optimally;

(e) Revising the scoring and integration system for different competencies.

18. A series of assessments were held in mid-2001, each lasting three days and covering about 12 participants. In total, 66 candidates took the assessment: 35 were from UNDP; 26 were from other agencies, funds and programmes; and 6 were external candidates. Twelve were sitting/former resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators and 18 were women.

19. With respect to the actual selection procedures, the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel (IAAP) — an inter-agency group responsible for reviewing candidates and making recommendations — met in September, and reviewed the procedures and practice over the last three years of nominating resident coordinator candidates. This exercise revised policies and procedures to ensure that only the best candidates are selected in a timely and effective manner. The panel recommended several measures directed towards streamlining and the improved operationalization of existing policies and guidelines, fast tracking of resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator posts and expansion of the candidate pool.

20. In another step taken to monitor and strengthen the performance of resident coordinators, UNDG Executive Committee agencies agreed to financial arrangements for establishing modalities for a 180-degree feedback exercise.

21. During the year, UNICEF participated in the Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System — which it chaired — as well as that of IAAP. As of 30 November 2001, three UNICEF staff members were serving as resident coordinators. In addition, one UNICEF special representative was serving as Acting Humanitarian Coordinator, and one UNICEF country representative was in an extended resident coordinator a.i. position.

Problems and lessons learned

22. As of December 2000, out of 120 resident coordinators, some 20 were from agencies other than UNDP (17 per cent) and 31 were women (26 per cent). By June 2001, out of 115 resident coordinators, some 22 (19 per cent) were from agencies other than UNDP and 30 were women (26 per cent).

23. While there has been measurable progress in the past year towards an enhanced and diverse pool of resident coordinators, the low number of females remains a cause for concern. The policy adopted by UNDG in November 2001 aims at ensuring that 50 per cent of candidates proposed by all agencies for the resident coordinators assessment are women. In addition, a more determined effort will be made to recruit more resident coordinators with experience in humanitarian affairs for countries in special development situations or in post-conflict recovery.

24. The length of time involved in the selection of resident coordinators requires a more flexible form of inter-agency selection procedures to ensure rapid placement. In particular, UNDG has agreed to publish the list of vacancies in advance and to expedite the new policies and practices of the Inter-Agency Selection Panel in order to minimize the time between the departure of one resident coordinator and the arrival of his/her successor in a country office.

Recommendations

25. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the progress made in strengthening the assessment process for resident coordinators and in broadening the pool of candidates, especially the efforts to promote a cultural and gender-neutral assessment;

(b) *Encourage* all entities participating in the resident coordinator system to put forward for the assessment at least 50 per cent women staff members;

(c) *Call for* rapid progress in improving the appraisal of the performance of resident coordinators and country teams.

D. Implementation of the Common Country Assessment/ United Nations Development Assistance Framework

26. During 2000, some 46 countries were expected to initiate the development of their UNDAFs. This large number constituted a major challenge for individual agencies as well as UNDG. While overall progress in developing CCAs was good, only a few of these countries managed to complete UNDAFs during the year.

Although in many cases the UNDAF process was well under way, this disconnect between completed UNDAFs and resultant country programmes of individual agencies remained an impediment to realizing the full potential of UNDAF.

27. In late 2000, UNDG agencies concluded that CCA/UNDAF required improved integration into individual programming procedures. This would streamline individual programming procedures and thereby lighten the demands of CCA and UNDAF. Subsequently, a UNDG Working Group on Harmonization of Programme Approval Processes prepared proposals for making the CCA and UNDAF a more integral part of respective programming processes, thus creating a UNDG process for the development, preparation and approval of country programmes that harmonizes timing, process and major documentation. Now approved by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, these proposals will be reviewed shortly by the UNICEF and WFP Executive Boards.

28. The full integration of CCA and UNDAF into each agency's programming process will represent a significant step towards timely and effective universal implementation of these instruments. While in 2001 only 11 additional countries embarked on the development of UNDAFs, it is considered that overall performance has improved. Insistence that each country undertaking a CCA/UNDAF take full advantage of the technical support available to country teams through DGO and the United Nations Staff College also helped to ensure more timely and effective processes. A growing accumulation of experience and lessons learned, the exchange of good examples and practices, the increasing understanding of the concepts and processes at the country level, and effective support, guidance and monitoring from headquarters and regional levels have helped to ensure that the processes in the 2001 roll-out countries have been more timely and effective.

29. UNICEF continued to offer additional support to its country offices engaged in CCAs/UNDAFs as part of the regular support provided to countries preparing new country programmes. The inclusion of United Nations reform and the CCA/UNDAF as standard items for regional management team meetings has also helped to keep the processes on track in terms of time as well as quality. The creation of internal support capacity and increased understanding of the importance and value of these processes among managers as well as programme and operations staff have been a key goal in 2001. Modules on CCA/UNDAF and United Nations reform have also been included in the revised and updated "Programme Planning and Procedures" training package of UNICEF. In addition, the regular UNICEF orientation now provides newly appointed representatives and other senior leaders with elements related to the CCA/UNDAF and to United Nations reform in general.

30. UNICEF continued to provide carefully selected candidates for the training of resource persons and team builders carried out under the auspices of DGO and the United Nations Staff College. By the end of 2001, UNICEF had a network of some 15 trained and highly committed staff who had undergone training in Turin and were available to support United Nations country teams in their mainstreaming of CCA/UNDAF into the regular work of headquarters-, regional- and country-level offices.

Problems and lessons learned

31. Problems experienced in the implementation of CCAs/UNDAFs were documented extensively in the external assessment of UNDAF as well as in reviews

conducted as part of the preparations for the TCPR. In addition, a UNDG/ACC workshop held in March 2001 to review the external evaluations provided further insight into ways in which these processes could be strengthened.

32. In July 2001, the UNDG Executive Committee approved a follow-up action plan to strengthen implementation of CCA/UNDAF. Action was foreseen in five areas: strengthening/changing the guidance provided to country teams and partners; improving and reorienting training, primarily through the Turin Staff College, but also within agencies; strengthening and rationalizing how agencies learn about these instruments and related issues, as well as how lessons learned are disseminated; strengthening and mainstreaming management and accountability within the resident coordinator system and within agencies; and harmonizing and simplifying programming tools and procedures, particularly programme preparation and clearance procedures, which are critical for achieving quality improvement in CCA/UNDAF.

33. Actions undertaken by agencies include revision of training materials, strengthening internal accountability, and dissemination of guidance and lessons learned. These measures have included the development of guidelines on the relationship between CCAs/UNDAFs and PRSPs, revamping of the basic training package provided through the United Nations Staff College at Turin, and the development of harmonized procedures and documentation for the country programme development process. UNDG also endorsed several measures to strengthen the quality of CCA/UNDAF and increase accountability:

(a) United Nations country teams would be reminded to ensure ownership of the CCA and UNDAF processes by Governments and the involvement of all stakeholders, including civil society;

(b) The CCA/UNDAF Learning Network would be activated to better identify good practices in terms of ownership, participation, strategic focus and results orientation. These should be shared with all country teams as part of a continuing process of strengthening guidance and support;

(c) The regional or programme structures of each agency, and of the Executive Committee members in particular, would be requested by the respective agency head to give substantially higher priority to their participation in the Learning Network and to the monitoring and support of the CCA/UNDAF process;

(d) DGO would explore the potential for linking DevLink, RCNet and the Learning Network into a common United Nations system network;

(e) UNDG would invite ACC to consider positively (through the successor arrangements to the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System) joining UNDG members in ensuring that effective participation in CCA and UNDAF processes becomes an element of performance appraisal and assignment of field representatives;

(f) The respective regional and/or programme structures of UNDG members should meet at least once every three months to ensure that effective CCA/UNDAF processes are taking place. The possibility of inter-agency consultations at the country level, involving key headquarters and regional staff, should be explored for selected countries. Also, the possibility of organizing consultations at the regional or

subregional level should be considered, in which case regional structures such as the regional commissions and some specialized agencies may be able to participate;

(g) Drawing up of a common text for directives to their regional/programme structures, and to ensure that the respective directives are shared and followed up.

34. At the beginning of 2001, all four Executive Committee member agencies also issued instructions to their regional and country offices requesting the inclusion of accountabilities for CCA/UNDAF in the performance plans and assessments of representatives and other key staff.

Recommendations

35. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Welcome* the efforts already undertaken by UNDG to increase the quality and effectiveness of the CCA and UNDAF processes, in particular efforts to enhance national ownership and participation;

(b) *Encourage* resident coordinators and country teams to continue to improve the quality of UNDAFs and their responsiveness to national priorities;

(c) *Welcome* the efforts of the funds and programmes to mainstream the CCA and UNDAF into their own programme planning and development procedures, and to ensure greater accountability among staff at headquarters, regional and country office levels;

(d) *Request* the funds and programmes to take systematically into account the outcome of the TCPR in their further efforts to help countries enhance the relevance and impact of CCA and UNDAF.

E. Harmonization of programmes and procedures

36. During 2001, UNDG continued to look into ways of promoting harmonization and simplification of programming and operational procedures. Monitoring of programme cycle harmonization has been mainstreamed into the regular activities of agencies. Guidance on joint programming was developed and disseminated as a reference tool for country teams. The Management Group examined procedures and practices relating to national staff and drew up a number of recommendations. These were circulated to country teams, which were encouraged to explore all possibilities for harmonizing practices related to conditions of service for locally recruited personnel.

37. Most significant, however, was the ongoing effort to harmonize and synchronize the programme preparation and approval procedures of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP. This will improve the work of UNDG agencies at country and headquarters levels. It will assist in the timely preparation of CCAs and UNDAFs and contribute to improving the quality and relevance of these instruments. Agencies have also made progress in simplifying individual programming procedures to minimize any additional workload caused by the introduction of the CCA and UNDAF.

38. A key requirement has been the need to avoid increasing burdens on country offices and national authorities. With UNICEF staff often playing a substantive role

in developing CCAs and UNDAFs — particularly in countries where the presence and capacity of other members of UNDG are limited — the need to streamline internal processes is critical. Thus, UNICEF also sought ways in which the internal processes of country programme development, management and implementation could be streamlined. This resulted in proposed changes to the timing and nature of analytical and assessment work that UNICEF carries out with national and other partners on the situation of children, and simplification of documentation required for the country programme itself. This will eventually lead to streamlining of requirements in terms of annual reports and other management tools. The revisions will come into force during 2002, pending approval by the Executive Board.

Problems and lessons learned

39. The Executive Boards, as well as senior management, of the funds and programmes must combine their efforts, in their respective spheres of competence, in order to accelerate and expand simplification and harmonization of procedures while maintaining acceptable standards of accountability. Simplification and harmonization in areas such as financial management, personnel and reporting on implementation require intergovernmental decisions as well as commitments by each individual agency.

Recommendations

40. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Welcome* the progress achieved by UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP in the harmonization of their country programme preparation and approval processes;

(b) *Encourage* the members of UNDG to ensure effective implementation of the new harmonized procedures;

(c) *Encourage* all members of UNDG, in their harmonization and simplification efforts, to seek further ways of reducing the transaction costs of country programming.

F. Gender mainstreaming and gender balance

41. Induced by country and regional consultations with a broad spectrum of partners, UNICEF advocacy since Beijing+5 has focused on four themes: gender equality starts early; women's rights and girl's rights are interdependent; children's rights cannot be achieved without girl's rights; and community-based partnerships are needed to end all forms of violence, prevent HIV/AIDS and manage care services (in particular for populations in complex emergencies).

42. UNICEF continues its commitment to leadership in the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, a 10-year programme launched by the Secretary-General that builds on the Education for All movement to support girls' education and eliminate the gender gap and bias. With the active membership of 13 United Nations entities, current activities include the distribution of an advocacy brochure, circulation of a guidance note to country teams and preparation of a training module. During the upcoming year, the focus will be on the further building of partnerships and the provision of support to country teams.

G. Common premises and services

43. The UNDG Working Group on Common Premises and Services, currently chaired by UNICEF, continues to provide information and technical support to United Nations country teams in pursuit of creating United Nations Houses. During 2001, eight missions were undertaken to nine countries. To date, 46 United Nations Houses have been officially designated by the Secretary-General, including the designation of five new United Nations Houses in 2001.

44. United Nations agencies are recognizing that common services can offer enhanced quality and cost-saving opportunities in times of shrinking resources and complex operational challenges. In November 2001, the UNDG Working Group, in conjunction with the United Nations Staff College and DGO, completed a training workshop as part of an 18-month common services pilot programme sponsored by the United Kingdom Department for International Development. The programme will be evaluated with a goal of developing a global rollout of United Nations common services, and revising, if necessary, the operational guidelines on common services.

Recommendation

45. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Take note* of the approach to common premises and services;

(b) *Encourage* further progress;

(c) *Reaffirm* the requirements for shared management, transparency, accountability and cost-effectiveness.

H. Cooperation with the World Bank

46. UNICEF continues to expand and deepen its partnerships with the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly the World Bank. There are regular policy and operational meetings between the World Bank and UNICEF at both headquarters and the country level.

47. A major issue in the relationship with the World Bank is the complementarity of programme frameworks and the extent of collaboration in their preparation. The PRSP process has created new opportunities for a policy dialogue on actions to benefit children. The common position of the United Nations system at the country level, in line with the 20/20 Initiative and the overarching goal of poverty reduction, is that the bulk of potential savings from debt relief measures should go towards funding basic social services.

48. A major focus of UNDG and UNICEF interaction with the World Bank in the past year has been cooperation in the preparation of PRSPs and CCAs/UNDAFs, with special reference to the interrelationships between the two. UNICEF has maintained regular contact with the Bank through semi-annual consultations on critical policy and operational issues, and also participated in the UNDG/World Bank Learning Group that has focused on experiences in the implementation of PRSPs and the linkage with CCAs/UNDAFs. This process has enabled UNDG to develop and send to country teams a guidance note on the PRSP, incorporating

clarification of the relationship between the different instruments and practical guidance to make the United Nations contribution more effective in pursuing national poverty reduction.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

49. While UNDG funds and programmes are encouraged by intergovernmental processes to ensure close collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions, and the World Bank in particular, there is a sense that similar encouragement is not given to the World Bank to cooperate more closely with UNDG. The Bank may fail to appreciate the unique contribution that the United Nations system as a whole as well as individual agencies can bring to poverty reduction processes.

50. In many of the newer areas of collaboration, such as HIV/AIDS, post-conflict reconstruction or peace-building, the roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. The establishment of a clearer definition of the respective areas of work is an important requirement.

Recommendations

51. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Welcome* the adoption of the UNDG guidance note to United Nations country teams on the PRSP;

(b) *Encourage* the dialogue of UNDG members with the World Bank in order to establish closer linkages among instruments such as UNDAF and PRSP, where applicable;

(c) *Invite* the Bretton Woods institutions to cooperate more closely in the development of CCAs and UNDAFs.

I. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

52. The year 2000 marked the culmination of a wide range of activities related to the end-decade assessment of progress towards the World Summit for Children goals. To fill data gaps, more than 60 countries conducted multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), and an additional 35 countries carried out Demographic and Health Surveys supported by the United States Agency for International Development. UNICEF provided technical support to countries conducting surveys through technical workshops covering survey design and implementation, data processing, data analysis and report writing. A fourth set of regional workshops is currently in progress aimed at creating microdata files that will facilitate the further analysis of the MICS data, which constitute an invaluable resource for programme planning and evaluation by national Governments and others.

53. UNICEF carried out global and regional assessments of progress in the situation of children and women over the decade, which formed the basis for the Secretary-General's end-decade report in 2001. These assessments were based on a review of national end-decade reports and on data from a wide range of sources, including routine and administrative systems, and household surveys, including MICS. Detailed country-specific information, as well as the full set of technical tools for conducting MICS, have been published on the Internet.

54. The analysis of trends over the last decade were utilized in the development of goals and targets for the next decade, as articulated in the draft outcome document on "A world fit for children" (A/AC.256/CRP.6/Rev.3). In addition, over one half of the indicators proposed for monitoring progress on the MDGs are the same as those included in the Secretary-General's end-decade report. For these indicators, therefore, there is a much improved database from which to measure future progress on the MDGs.

55. Within UNICEF, the use of programme audit and self-assessment techniques has increased. Country programme management plans provide the basis for a more systematic analysis of institutional performance. Evaluation policy and guidance to country offices have been further clarified, and a results-based management focus has been strengthened in the forthcoming version of the programme policy and procedures manual. The integrated monitoring and evaluation plan sets clear ex-ante performance expectations and schedules performance assessment activities during programme implementation. Office management plans provide the basis for monitoring performance of headquarters divisions and regional offices in the accomplishment of the MTSP objectives.

56. UNICEF is developing the basic principles and methodology for the evaluation of country programmes, and tests have been done in two countries. UNICEF has established, in coordination with the Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WFP, a framework for carrying out inter-agency evaluations of humanitarian response. A model terms of reference for a joint evaluation was developed and tested in one country.

57. Electronic networking has become the popular medium for receiving and disseminating evaluation methodologies, findings and lessons learned. The UNICEF Evaluation Office has distributed an updated CD-ROM on monitoring and evaluation training materials to every country office, and is in the process of testing and finalizing draft materials on monitoring and evaluation in unstable and crisis contexts. The UNICEF evaluation database is being upgraded in response to the increasing demand for institutional learning. UNICEF has given strong support to national capacity-building efforts for evaluation, particularly in Africa where it supported the establishment of a national association on evaluation. Such efforts have resulted in active information-sharing networks and the formation of some 20 national associations.

Problems and lessons learned

58. With greater awareness of the need for the more effective use of resources and for greater transparency and accountability, there is an increasing demand for the presentation of results of UNICEF activities. In response, evaluation practices are being strengthened to support decision-making at project, country programme, strategic and policy levels. The use of existing information is also emphasized to avoid duplication of efforts.

59. There is United Nations-wide recognition for establishing harmonized and effective United Nations performance monitoring systems. Such systems would demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of inter-agency mechanisms such as UNDAF and CCA. An inter-agency working group on evaluation, of which UNICEF is an active partner, is addressing this challenge.

Recommendations

60. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Request* the United Nations system to set standards for the evaluation function so that it may serve the governance, policy, programme and activity levels of management;

(b) *Request* the United Nations system to identify ways of accelerating system-wide collaboration for strengthening country-level monitoring and evaluation capacity;

(c) *Request* all United Nations agencies to design their respective databases for evaluations and lessons learned so as to ensure compatibility and smooth interfacing;

(d) *Request* the United Nations system to report on the extent of progress on the harmonization of evaluation practices as requested by the Council six years ago.

II. Integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits

61. The series of international conferences and General Assembly special sessions of the 1990s, culminating in the Millennium Summit of late 2000, now provide the basis for the United Nations system to support Governments in activities directed towards development and poverty eradication; peace, security and disarmament; environment; human rights, democracy and good governance; protecting the vulnerable; Africa; and strengthening the United Nations itself. While UNICEF has focused much of its attention on follow-up to the World Summit for Children and preparations for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, now scheduled for May 2002, it has also participated in the follow-up to other relevant conferences and special sessions through ACC and as a partner in UNDG, as well as directly through its own programmes.

62. Follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and work towards the MDGs were detailed in the Secretary-General's "road map" document, reviewed by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. UNICEF contributed to the preparation of the "road map" document and is an active partner in its implementation, results monitoring and reporting, as outlined by the High Level Committee on Programmes of ACC in mid-2001.

63. The road map requires the utilization of a series of child-specific indicators to measure progress against overall development goals: the prevalence of underweight children; the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; the proportion of one-year-olds immunized against measles; and the number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. The five organizational priorities of UNICEF for 2002-2005, as set out in the MTSP, will contribute directly to goal attainment as spelled out in the road map. The five priorities are: girl's education; integrated early childhood development; immunization "plus"; fighting HIV/AIDS; and increased protection of children from violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

64. UNICEF was active with its UNDG partners in clarifying and defining the framework of the MDGs, targets and indicators, working in close collaboration with the United Nations, particularly the Office of the Secretary-General and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and with the specialized agencies, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. UNDG prepared a guidance note for country-level reporting of the MDGs, distributed to field representatives in November 2001. At present, there are pilot MDG reports in 13 countries, with the United Republic of Tanzania pilot having been presented to the Economic and Social Council in July 2001.

65. With respect to the Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS and UNICEF prioritized action in reference to this framework, UNICEF is working closely in coordination with other core partners and has assumed a lead role for interventions aimed at the prevention of parent-to-child transmission; the reduction of the risk for and vulnerability of young people; and the protection and care of children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS. Since effective responses to the epidemic require the integration of education, prevention and care strategies, the UNICEF country programme approach will allow for operationalization of the synergy among them, especially at the community level. Here, UNICEF will facilitate interaction among key social groups and government service providers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parents living with HIV/AIDS, households headed by children and adolescents.

66. UNICEF remains active in several aspects of implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Legal reform and advocacy in favour of "child-friendly" cities have remained central in the popular "Mayors as Defenders of Children" initiative supported by UNICEF. UNICEF promotes a decentralized and participatory approach to empower people to care for children and protect their rights. The emphases are both process and results, with a focus on sustainable basic services for all in a healthy and safe environment.

67. One of the major challenges for UNICEF has been to ensure that others mobilize the needed resources for children. For example, the special focus on gender issues in urbanization has transformed the way local authorities and social groups approach matters of urban governance, housing rights, basic services and urban violence. To accomplish this, UNICEF has cooperated closely with other agencies in UNDG, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization, UNESCO, and the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. As co-sponsor of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, UNICEF has coordinated its efforts with communities and civil society organizations to combat the pandemic in the special conditions created by densely populated urban settings.

68. UNICEF continues to work actively in the inter-agency preparations for the series of special session scheduled for 2002: the International Conference on Financing for Development; the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children; the World Food Summit; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Problems and lessons learned

69. The coordinated follow-up to conferences has created a wide set of goals and targets. Translation into specific areas of action and implementation at the country level, as well as effective monitoring and evaluation of results, have provided a major challenge. Now, with the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, there is a limited set of clearly defined targets and goals with universal recognition and an explicit recognition of the interlinkages among various sectors, hitherto often regarded separately: development; humanitarian action; peace and security; and human rights. A large proportion of country teams has already made significant efforts to reorganize their reporting of activities along the lines of the MDGs. A number of country teams have also used discussion of the Millennium Goals as a means for achieving an enhanced dialogue with national organizations and groups.

70. A challenge remains, however, in establishing links between coordination instruments such as CCA and UNDAF and the Millennium Goals. Thus, in the annual reports of the resident coordinators, several country teams stated that CCA provided them with a tool for assessing progress made towards implementation at the national level of the goals and targets set out at the global conferences. The challenge, therefore, is to retain the country-led specificity of the CCA and UNDAF with the need to meet international commitments made at the Millennium Summit. Thus, CCA indicators should include, but not be limited to, the indicators developed to monitor the MDGs.

71. Successful follow-up to the Millennium Declaration will require appropriate political support and adequate financial resources. In too many country cases, the volume, consistency and reliability of financial support have failed to match expectations created by the event itself. In this regard, the upcoming Financing for Development Conference will represent an important milestone. Additionally, greater use of the 20/20 Initiative and support for PRSPs would provide strong support.

Recommendations

72. The Council may wish to:

(a) *Note* the progress made in the integrated follow-up to conferences and the Millennium Summit as well as in the conference-specific follow-up under appropriate lead agencies;

(b) *Call upon* Governments to provide leadership in the follow-up to conferences, and for all stakeholders, including bilateral donors, to participate actively in this process;

(c) *Welcome* the development of the MDG indicator framework as a way to strengthen conference follow-up and monitoring of the MDGs at the country level;

(d) *Encourage* country teams to monitor follow-up to global conferences and summits, especially through the goals and targets enshrined in the Millennium Declaration, and for the annual reports of the resident coordinator and of the individual agencies to take these fully into account;

(e) *Call upon* Member States to make available adequate resources for the full implementation of conference plans of action and the MDGs.

III. Humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

73. Although the Economic and Social Council did not agree on a substantive concluding document at its 2001 session, UNICEF has continued its active role in advocating for children's concerns in conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian operations.

74. UNICEF worked closely with the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and other United Nations departments in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on children and armed conflict. The moving statement of a 14-year-old ex-combatant from Sierra Leone highlighted consideration of this item by the Security Council — the first time a child has participated in a Security Council meeting. The resulting resolution provides for the inclusion of child protection concerns in the work of the Security Council, as well as in the work of peace-keeping and peace-building missions, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions and regional organizations. Other areas of active involvement by UNICEF included small arms, the protection of civilians, conflict and the private sector, the humanitarian impact of sanctions, human rights, and humanitarian action and gender.

75. UNICEF continues to work through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and it various reference groups, as well as being a member of ECHA and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security on a variety of policy and operational issues related to humanitarian and disaster relief. During the year, action was taken to establish an Inter-Agency Working Group for the integration of child protection concerns in peace-keeping, peace-making and peace-building operations. Established jointly by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF, this group will develop recommendations and guidelines on the ways in which child-related issues can be better integrated into the political work of the United Nations.

76. During 2001, UNICEF used its Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) to retain emergency response capacity in key emergencies where external resources were slowly disbursed or where there were opportunities to accelerate programmes. The EPF was used in the Sudan (Operation Lifeline from Khartoum as well as from Nairobi), Afghanistan, Angola, Liberia, Burundi, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, the south-eastern Europe region (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), the Central America region (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) and Cuba.

77. Additionally, UNICEF accessed funding from the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) to jumpstart emergency actions for children and women affected by the protracted humanitarian situation in Sudan. Another major area of involvement during the year was addressing the acute needs of internally displaced persons and refugee women and children affected by the crisis in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries, for which UNICEF borrowed from CERF to enable pre-positioning of critical supplies as well as for cross-border operations.

78. During 2001, UNICEF worked closely with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UNDP and other United Nations agencies involved in mine action to develop the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2001-2005 and the United Nations Sectoral Policy on Information Management for Mine Action.

UNICEF has also developed its own mine action strategy in order to fulfil its broader child protection mandate, its specific mine action mandate and the commitments it has made as part of the United Nations strategy. The UNICEF mine action strategy will be launched in January 2002.

79. On behalf of the United Nations, UNICEF is developing the mine awareness and risk reduction education components of the International Mine Action Standards, and supplementary technical notes on monitoring and evaluation, as well as defining the mine awareness and risk reduction requirements for the Information Management System for Mine Action. These and other global projects and tools are being developed under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Steering Committee for Mine Action, through a Standing Mine Awareness Working Group set up by UNICEF and comprising United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and a range of NGOs engaged in mine awareness/risk reduction and/or advocacy.

80. In addition to its global role in providing mine awareness/risk reduction coordination and technical guidance, UNICEF is engaged in mine awareness/risk reduction, advocacy and/or victim assistance to varying degrees in some 30 countries, and in 2001, for the first time, placed one of its staff as Chief, Mine Awareness Office, in a United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre in cooperation with the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, UNMAS and UNDP. UNICEF continues to advocate for universal ratification of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and is supporting the call of ICRC for the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to be strengthened by an Optional Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. In order to work more closely with ICRC, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNHCR, WFP and other European-based agencies, a land mines officer was appointed to the UNICEF Office of Emergency Programmes in Geneva in October 2001.

81. The safety and security of UNICEF and all United Nations personnel remain a very high priority, with staff members continuing to face enormous risks in the course of carrying out their duties. In the last nine years, 224 national and international staff members have been killed, over 250 have been taken hostage, and countless others have been the victims of rape, robbery, carjacking and other violent crimes. The urgent need to enhance the United Nations Security Management System has now been widely recognized, with endorsement by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of a proposal by the Secretary-General to appoint a full-time Security Coordinator and enhance the capacity of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, including a considerable increase in the number of professional security officers employed at headquarters and in the field. This proposal is currently under review by the General Assembly. There is agreement by the United Nations and its funds, programmes and specialized agencies on a new cost-sharing formula for safety and security expenditures projected at $53 million over the next biennium. While the impact of these improvements will be considerable, there is still the need for host Governments to take greater responsibility for the safety of United Nations staff and to do more to bring to justice those responsible for attacks against them.

Part two
Summary of the deliberations of the Executive Board on the annual report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council*

10. The Director, Office of United Nations Affairs and External Relations, introduced the Executive Director's annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/2002/4 (Part I)) on the follow up to Economic and Social Council and General Assembly resolutions. The document was prepared in accordance with an approved format and one that was common with the corresponding reports to the UNDP/UNFPA and WFP Executive Boards. The report covered implementation of the Secretary-General's reform programmes and of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) as well as relations with the World Bank, follow-up of the major international conferences and a brief section on responding to humanitarian crises. In addition, under this agenda item, there was a report of the Executive Director on follow-up to the reports of JIU. There were four reports of relevance to UNICEF. Copies of the reports were made available in the room and were available on the JIU web site.

11. With respect to the follow-up to the Council, the report focused on the various aspects of the TCPR, the latest round of which had not yet been completed at the time the report was finalized. In light of this, the secretariat provided an update based on the current situation.

12. A number of delegations commended the secretariat for the useful report and expressed their appreciation that it followed the agreed upon format. The focus on the reform efforts of the Secretary-General and the TCPR were noted with appreciation. However, some delegations requested that future reports focus on UNICEF's own experiences and lessons learned with regard to participation in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), the resident coordinator system, Common Country Assessments/United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (CCAs/UNDAFs) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and that the reports be more analytical. Some delegations expressed interest in seeing an analysis of how CCAs, UNDAFs and better coordination in general have affected UNICEF country programmes and what have been the benefits.

13. Noting that the CCA/UNDAF had been discussed extensively in the TCPR, some delegations reiterated the need to improve the quality of both the process and the product. They also welcomed the efforts undertaken by UNICEF to integrate these instruments into its own programming procedures.

14. Several speakers expressed concern about the decline in core resources and the increase in non-core funding, as they saw that the current situation could affect the multilateral nature of the funds and programmes.

15. Turning to the resident coordinator system, a number of delegations noted with concern the low number of females and UNICEF staff serving as resident coordinators.

16. Progress towards simplification and harmonization was met with approval, but several delegations noted that much work remained to be done. In this regard some

* Excerpt from the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2002. The complete report will be issued as document E/2002/34 (Part I).

speakers said that they looked forward to a substantive discussion on the subject at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards. One delegation reminded the secretariat that the process should aim to lessen the burden on Governments.

17. Strengthened cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, particularly in the context of poverty reduction strategies, was encouraged by a number of delegations, with some offering to assist in the effort if needed. A speaker recommended that the secretariat proceed cautiously in order to ensure that conditionalities, which were part of the framework of the Bretton Woods institutions, did not affect the work of UNICEF. (See E/ICEF/2002/8 (Part I), annex II, decisions 2002/2 and 2002/3, for the texts of the decisions adopted by the Executive Board.)